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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/15/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [ENRG](#) [JA](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: CHINA-JAPAN: BEIJING AWAITS ABE'S REMARKS BEFORE
CONSIDERING SUMMIT MEETING

REF: BEIJING 18543

CLASSIFIED BY: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR DANIEL
SHIELDS. REASONS 1.4 (B/D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: CHINA HAD NO ROLE IN PUBLICIZING A PHOTO OF PREMIER WEN JIABAO SHAKING HANDS WITH JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER KOIZUMI AT THIS WEEK'S ASEM SUMMIT, A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL SAID. CHINA REMAINS INTERESTED IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH JAPAN, THE OFFICIAL SAID, BUT AWAITS PRESUMPTIVE NEXT PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE'S COMMENTS ON HISTORICAL ISSUES BEFORE IT IS PREPARED TO THINK CONCRETELY ABOUT A MEETING BETWEEN ABE AND CHINESE LEADERS, INCLUDING AT THE APEC LEADERS MEETING OR THE EAST ASIAN SUMMIT LATER THIS YEAR. CHINA SAW THE RECENT VISIT BY A JAPANESE VICE-MINISTER TO TAIWAN AS A "BAD SIGN" FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS. CHINESE COMPANIES HAVE NOT BEGUN DRILLING FOR OIL IN DISPUTED AREAS OF THE EAST CHINA SEA, THE OFFICIAL SAID. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) CHINA HAD NO ROLE IN PUBLICATION OF A PHOTOGRAPH OF WEN JIABAO SHAKING HANDS WITH JAPANESE PM KOIZUMI ON THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE ASIA-EUROPE MEETING SUMMIT, MFA JAPAN DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR LU GUIJUN TOLD POLOFF SEPTEMBER 15. JAPANESE MEDIA REPORTS CLAIMING THAT THE CHINESE TOOK THE PHOTO AND SUBMITTED IT TO THE FINNISH HOSTS TO SIGNAL A WILLINGNESS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS ARE GROUNDLESS, LU SAID. CHINA REMAINS INTERESTED AND WILLING TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH TOKYO BUT ITS PREREQUISITE CONDITION, NAMELY THAT JAPAN'S LEADER PROMISE NOT TO VISIT THE YASAKUNI SHRINE, REMAINS UNCHANGED, HE SAID.

¶3. (C) CHINA AWAITS PRESUMPTIVE NEW PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABES FIRST SPEECH UPON TAKING OFFICE BEFORE IT WILL MAKE ANY DECISION ON WHETHER CHINESE LEADERS MIGHT MEET WITH ABE AT MULTILATERAL MEETINGS LATER THIS YEAR, LU SAID. BOTH THE NOVEMBER APEC LEADERS MEETING IN HANOI AND THE DECEMBER EAST ASIAN SUMMIT WOULD BE OPPORTUNITIES FOR A CHINESE LEADER TO MEET WITH ABE, LU SAID, BUT SUCH A MEETING COULD ONLY HAPPEN IF ABE FIRST PROMISED NOT TO VISIT YASAKUNI. SEPARATELY, JAPANESE EMBASSY COUNSELOR KAZUYA ENDO TOLD POLOFF THAT HE FOUND IT LIKELY THAT BEIJING WOULD PROTECT PRESIDENT HU JINTAO EARLY IN ABE'S ADMINISTRATION AND AVOID PROPOSING THAT HE MEET WITH ABE. ENDO SPECULATED THAT BEIJING "MIGHT" PROPOSE THAT PREMIER WEN AND ABE MEET AT THE EAS IN DECEMBER.

¶4. (C) OFFICIALS FROM ACROSS CHINESE MINISTRIES RECENTLY HAVE BEEN REQUESTING A LOT OF ANALYSIS FROM THE MFA ABOUT THE LIKELY POLICIES OF AN ABE GOVERNMENT LU SAID. HE WOULD NOT BE DRAWN ON THE CONTENT OF THE ANALYSES HE HAS DRAFTED BUT LU SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY BELIEVES ABE WILL TAKE A HARD LINE TOWARD CHINA AS PM

BUT WILL BE MORE TACTFUL THAN KOIZUMI WAS.

JAPANESE MINISTER TO TAIWAN; EAST CHINA SEA

15. (C) THE AUGUST 15 VISIT OF A JAPANESE VICE MINISTER FOR FISHERIES TO TAIWAN STRUCK BEIJING AS A "BAD SYMBOL" FOR THE FUTURE OF SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS, LU SAID. NOT ONLY DID THE VISIT VIOLATE JAPAN'S "ONE CHINA PLEDGE," BUT IT ALSO INVOLVED DISCUSSIONS OF TERRITORIAL AND MILITARY DIMENSIONS OF MARITIME ISSUES IN THE EAST CHINA SEA, RAISING BEIJING'S LEVEL OF CONCERN, HE ADDED.

16. (C) RESPONDING TO POLOFF'S QUESTION ABOUT A POSTING ON THE WEBSITE OF A CHINESE OIL COMPANY THAT IT HAD BEGUN PRODUCTION OF OIL AND GAS FROM A FIELD IN A DISPUTED AREA OF THE EAST CHINA SEA, LU CATEGORICALLY REJECTED THE NOTION. HE SAID NO DRILLING HAD YET TAKEN PLACE. HE REPEATED POINTS REPORTED REFTTEL THAT BEIJING DOES NOT UNDERSTAND TOKYOS RECENT PROTESTS ABOUT CONSTRUCTION OF DRILLING PLATFORMS IN THE DISPUTED AREA, HOWEVER, SINCE ALL ARE ON CHINA'S SIDE OF THE MEDIAN LINE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

RANDT